

WATERCRAFT PROGRAM

The Department is a managing partner of the State's waterways since 1968. At that time, there were less than 100,000 registered boats in the state. Today, there are more than 150,000 registered boats in the state. The Department's watercraft program is designed to promote the safe and responsible use of Arizona's waterways through proactive law enforcement and effective boating education efforts statewide.

The Department enforces watercraft-related laws and regulations to promote safe and responsible watercraft recreation activities. Law enforcement efforts are administered through the Field Operations Division and the Law Enforcement Branch housed in the Phoenix central office, and implemented by Wildlife Managers and law enforcement personnel assigned to each of the state's six regional offices. The Division and Branch provide administrative structure, planning, training, oversight and coordination for Project personnel and cooperators, while other work units also contribute to the program.

The Department uses watercraft law enforcement patrols, officer visibility, officer contact, and information and education programs to enhance public awareness and knowledge of watercraft-related laws and regulations as a means of improving voluntary compliance. The Department accomplishes the watercraft law enforcement efforts by means of the following activities including, but not limited to:

- Marked unit patrols;
- Special patrol efforts;
- Accident investigations;
- Hull identification number/marine theft investigation in support of the Department's watercraft registration process;
- Watercraft law enforcement training;
- Watercraft law enforcement management;
- Needs assessments;
- Reporting and dissemination of watercraft law enforcement information;
- Coordination with other jurisdictions and cooperators.
- Administration of boating safety Grants

The Law Enforcement Branch provides watercraft law enforcement training to Department employees and cooperating law enforcement agencies regarding watercraft-related laws, regulations, and policies. We strive to be a workforce that is highly skilled and trained and utilizes the most appropriate law enforcement techniques to accomplish our objectives.

To Facilitate safe and responsible use of the state's watercraft and wildlife resources, the Department conducts, develops and maintains strong interagency and organizational partnerships and maintains effective inter-agency communication and coordination with land management agencies and public entities including, but not limited to the following:

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- U.S. Forest Service
- National Parks Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Arizona State Parks
- County Board's of Supervisors
- Municipalities
- Tribal entities
- Area council of governments

By developing and maintaining strong interagency and organizational partnerships, the Department ensures that recreation plans, agreements and law enforcement operations effectively, promote recreational boating opportunities, inform and educate the public on safe and responsible watercraft use, promote courtesy and ethical watercraft use and reduce user group conflicts, and provide technical assistance to land management agencies on boating safety, boat accident data, and watercraft law enforcement matters.

OPERATION APPROACHES

Watercraft Law Enforcement Patrol

1. Concentrated patrol efforts will be targeted at Easter, Memorial, 4th of July and Labor Day weekends. Phoenix based officer support will be used to augment this activity. General patrol effort should be varied, emphasize weekends and other high use periods, and include nighttime activity. As applicable, our efforts will be coordinated with other local watercraft enforcement entities. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4)
2. Patrol emphasis, based on public input, boater use day data, and boat accident data, will be directed at Operating Under the Influence (OUI) and reckless operation statutes enforcement. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)
3. Specific coordinated watercraft enforcement operations will be targeted as follows (contingent upon lake levels) (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1):
 - Region I will focus on personal floatation device compliance on Regional lakes.
 - Region II – OUI Apprehension Efforts at Lake Powell
 - Region III – OUI Apprehension Efforts at Lake Mohave, Lake Mead, Colorado River-Upper Topock Gorge and a wolfpack patrol efforts downstream of Willow Beach.
 - Region IV – OUI Apprehension Efforts along the Colorado River – Martinez Lake, Parker Strip, and north Lake Havasu. Region IV will also continue to direct enforcement efforts to deal with marine event issues.
 - Region VI – OUI Apprehension Efforts at Saguaro Lake, Roosevelt Lake, Apache Lake, Canyon Lake, Lake Pleasant and Bartlett Lake
 - In areas where chronic issues regarding reckless operation have been documented, targeted patrols may be initiated.

4. Regions I & V will provide manpower resources in support of other Regional watercraft operations. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)
5. Watercraft law enforcement contacts will continue to be enumerated and monitored as per set project targets, and Game Ranger cards will be distributed systematically by each Region to responsively target specific patrols. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)

Boat Accident Investigations and Reporting

1. The Department will compile all boat accident data and complete an annual boat accident technical report. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)
2. Department will collect and distribute watercraft registration, boat accident, and OUI data to law enforcement agencies and boating education instructors. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)

Watercraft Law Enforcement Training

1. Law Enforcement Branch will sponsor an Arizona Peace Officer and Standards Training Board (AZPOST) ten-day Watercraft Enforcement and Tactics Survival School during the spring of 2008 and 2009. All Field Operations Division work units will provide personnel and resources to support the training activity. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4, 4.A.6)
2. The Department will sponsor and coordinate attendance of one internal Department officer and two external watercraft law enforcement officers annually to the Marine Patrol Officers Watercraft Safety School presented by the United States Coast Guard. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4, 4.A.6)
3. Maintain representation in the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), the Western States Boating Administrators Association (WSBAA) and Association of Natural Resource Enforcement Trainers (ANRET). (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4, 4.A.6)

OUI Special Patrol Operations

1. The Department will deploy two new OUI Mobile Command Posts to facilitate OUI apprehension efforts. Specific new Intoxilyzer 8000 equipment training will be targeted for Regions III, IV and VI personnel. (1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7)
2. The Department will target to engage, participate or plan a minimum of six OUI special projects annually. (1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7)

3. Provide new Wildlife Manager trainees HGN and Intoxilyzer 8000 operator certification. (1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 4.A.6)
4. Implement OUI and Boating Safety Grants to be administered by a Statewide OUI Coordinator in the Law Enforcement Branch. (1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.D.4)

Watercraft Information and Education

1. Provide information at mall/trade/fair shows, distribute boating safety materials to clubs, dealers, boat parts shops etc., and expand current, and explore new avenues for dissemination of boating safety information such as the Internet, billboards, etc. (1.A.4, 1.B.8, 1.B.9, 2.A.3, 2.B.1, 2.B.2, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)
2. Develop and provide boating safety related articles for newspapers, magazines, newsletters, etc. (1.A.4, 1.B.8, 1.B.9, 2.A.3, 2.B.1, 2.B.2, 2.B.9, 2.C.1)
3. Train volunteer instructors in safety, laws, and regulations. Continue to expand availability of boating safety classes. (1.A.4, 1.B.8, 1.B.9, 2.B.1, 2.B.2, 3.C.1, 2.D.1-4, 4.A.8)

Watercraft Interagency and Organizational Partnerships

1. Enter into inter-agency agreements and partnerships with the boating law enforcement agency and organizations to promote and implement the Department's pilot OUI and Boating Safety Grant Programs. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4)
2. Maintain agreement and cooperative efforts and interagency cooperative efforts with external watercraft law enforcement, health care organizations and land management agencies including. (1.A.2, 1.B.9, 2.B.2, 2.B.7, 2.B.9, 2.C.1, 2.D.4)

LINKAGES TO OTHER OPERATIONAL PLANS

Business Administration Program:

- Provide procurement support for patrol boat and other capitol and non-capitol equipment purchases
- Provide watercraft registration for approximately 150,000 watercraft each year.

Information & Education Projects:

- Provide project-related or wildlife information for mass media inquiries.
- Provide information and education outreach support and materials for law enforcement projects statewide.
- Review and edit Department press releases for watercraft topics.
- Utilize multiple methods to disseminate law enforcement outreach messages will be continued such as: public service announcements, appearances at fairs, trade shows, safety shows and school events.
- Implement \$1M in FY08and FY09 OUI Marketing and Outreach Campaign

- Develop and distribute outreach materials to the boating public that encourage safe and responsible use while promoting voluntary compliance.

Research Project:

- Coordinate and assist in planning and implementing research contract projects, specifically supporting the design and implementation of a watercraft law enforcement compliance study in FY 2008 and 2009.

Development Project:

- Maintain approximately 350 navigational aids and hazard markings across the State.
- Provide expertise and training to crews that maintain navigational aids for other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as assisting other Department personnel with specialized markers for Department projects